

REMARKS

Applicant has amended claim 11 and has added new claims 25, 26 and 27.

Claims 1-27 are presently pending in this application.

Pursuant to a telephone conversation with the Examiner on March 12, 2007, we understand that the objection raised to the oath/declaration is resolved.

Claim 11 has been amended to address the Examiner's rejection for lack of antecedent basis for the "objects of the third type."

The Examiner rejected claim 18 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Patent Application US 2002/0128919 A1 to Rime et al. The Examiner also mentions Patent Application US 2002/0169675 A1 to Helot et al. but does not use it in the rejection. The Examiner also rejected claims 1-17 and 19- 24 under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over disclosures from Rime in view of additional art.

Rime in general describes a workflow system for processing orders by a network of gateways, in which gateways are responsible for directing the workflow through the network based on conditions set against values of the fields in the order. In Rime, different gateways may process different fields.

Although also related to orders, the present application is very different. The claims of the present application refer, in different ways, to order-related objects of at least two types, where each type represents an aspect of an order. The claims also relate to the establishment of relationships between order-related objects of different types. Aspects of an order may be, for example, a portion of the items in the order, to where a portion of the order is shipped, or how the buyer is paying for a portion of the order. The relationships between different aspects of an order allows, for example, an order to have different parts shipped to different locations, or paid for using different payment mechanisms.

Claim 18

Claim 18 includes a computer program product for use in defining “a relationship between a first type of object representing a first aspect of an order and a second type of object representing a second aspect of an order.” The computer program product includes instructions for causing a computer to create a data structure including “an identifier of a relationship type” and “an identifier of a relationship quantity.”

The Examiner points to Rime’s disclosure that “multiple gateways may be ‘interconnected’ and configured for processing of an order in a variety of ways.” As Rime explains, “gateways may be described as a ‘chain’ of gateways that are interconnected for purposes of processing orders” [0009] and “Business servers 2008 may have networks 2012 associated therewith interconnecting a plurality of gateways (e.g., personal computers or work stations) 2014” [0055].

These interconnections, or “links” used alternatively by Rime, are not relationships between objects representing different aspects of an order, as recited in claim 18. Rather, Rime discloses a workflow that may indicate a relationship from one gateway to another. But, the gateways are what process an order; they are not aspects of an order itself. Each gateway may process one field from the order, but this also is not a relationship between two aspects of an order.

Moreover Rime does not teach the use of identifiers of “a relationship type” or “a relationship quantity” as recited in claim 18. Whenever in Rime there is a quantity or type mentioned alongside an interconnection, it is related to a property of the ordered items and not a property or “type” of the relationship. In Rime’s disclosure associated with Fig. 2, the split order gateway 108 splits different parts of the order between gateways 202 and 212 based on the type of the item. Elsewhere, in Rime’s disclosure associated with Fig. 4, the split from the Inbox 404 to gateways X (412) and Y (414) is based on the quantity of the order. None of these teach a type or a quantity defined independent of the type or quantity of the ordered items as an intrinsic identifier of the relationship itself. As the specification of this application explains “[d]ifferent relationship types can be used to characterize the extent of the relationship. In one embodiment, a relationship can exist for a specified quantity of units, an amount, or a percentage of the price. Also, a relationship can exist for the remaining items or amount beyond those items or amounts

for which specified quantities, amounts, or percentages have been described.” [Page 2, Lines 18-22] These relationship types and quantities are explained in different examples. For instance, in relation to Figure 1, the specification explains that the “[s]hipping object 120a provides a shipping method for 3 of the items from item object 110a, as indicated by the (3) in relationship object 150a in Figure 1. Relationship object 150a has a relationship type of ShippingAmount, with a value of 3. Shipping object 120b provides a shipping method for the other 2 items from item object 110a, as indicated by relationship object 150b, in which the (*) indicates that the relationship type is ShippingAmountRemaining.” [Page 8, Lines 20-25] Thus, Rime fails to teach (or suggest) the use of relationship types or quantities as provided in claim 18.

For at least these reasons, claim 18 is patentable over Rime. The other cited prior art also does not teach or suggest these limitations.

Claims 1-9

Claim 1 recites a method for structuring an order, including creating a plurality of a first type of order-related object representing a first aspect of an order and creating a plurality of a second type of order-related object representing a second aspect of an order. Claim 1 also includes establishing a plurality of relationships between the plurality of a first type of object and the plurality of a second type of object. For the reasons discussed above, Rime and the other cited art does not teach or suggest creating objects representing aspects of the order and establishing relationships as recited in claim 1. For at least these reasons, claim 1 is patentable over the cited art.

Claims 2 to 9 are dependent on claim 1, and are patentable for the same reasons as claim 1.

Claim 10

Claim 10 recites a computer program product for use in structuring an order, including instructions for causing a computer to: create a plurality of objects of a plurality of types, “each of the plurality of types representing an aspect of an order.” The instructions cause a computer to “establish relationships between groups of the plurality of objects, wherein each group includes objects of different types, where each relationship includes an identifier of each object in the group and an “identifier of a relationship type.” As discussed above, the cited art does not teach or suggest this combination.

Claims 11-17

Claim 11 also recites a computer program product for use in structuring an order. The computer program product includes instructions for causing a computer to create first, second, and third types of objects representing first, second, and third aspects of an order. The instructions cause a computer to establish relationships between objects of the first type and objects of the second type; establish relationships between objects of the first type and objects of the third type; and establish relationships between objects of the second type and objects of the third type.” As discussed above, the cited art does not teach or suggest this combination.

Claims 12 to 17 are dependent on claim 11, and are patentable for at least the same reasons as claim 11.

Claims 23-24

Claim 23 recites an ordering system, with a user interface that permits the user to select items to be included in an order, along with selecting one or more destinations for delivery of the items, and one or more payment mechanisms. The system also includes an order processing module that provides representations of the items, the destinations, and the payment mechanisms. This module establishes relationships between the items and the destinations, and relationships between the items and the payment mechanisms, wherein the relationships between individual of the representations of items and individual of the representations of destinations are independent of the relationships between individual of the representations of items and individual of the representations of payment mechanisms. The cited art does not teach or suggest any such mechanism for establishing independent relationships between items and delivery destinations and between items and payment mechanisms. As discussed above, the cited art does not teach or suggest these relationships between different aspects of an order. And, more specifically, the cited art does not teach or suggest the establishment of independent relationships as claimed. Notably, in Rime, the delivery address and the payment mechanism are each unique and shared among all different items in the same order. Rime has no suggestion that there could be multiple delivery destinations or payment mechanisms in a single order.

Claim 24 recites the “ordering system of claim 23, wherein each relationship includes an identifier of a relationship type.” As discussed above, the cited art neither teaches elements in claim 23 nor the element of relationship type as recited in claim 24.

Claims 19-22

Claims 19, 20, and 22 recite the computer program product of claim 18, where the identifier of a relationship quantity signifies a specific value, a remainder value, and a maximum value respectively. Rime does not teach or suggest these types of relationship. Some embodiments of these types of identifiers are discussed in detail with regards to Fig. 1 in this application. For example, the specification describes that “[s]hipping object 120a provides a shipping method for 3 of the items from item object 110a, as indicated by the (3) in relationship object 150a in Figure 1. Relationship object 150a has a relationship type of ShippingAmount, with a value of 3. Shipping object 120b provides a shipping method for the other 2 items from item object 110a, as indicated by relationship object 150b, in which the (*) indicates that the relationship type is ShippingAmountRemaining.” [Page 8, Lines 20-25] The cited art does not teach or suggest these elements. For these reasons and the reasons described above with respect to claim 18, claims 19, 20, and 22 are patentable over the cited art.

Claim 21 recites the computer program product of claim 18, where the identifier of a relationship quantity signifies that the relationship is for an amount remaining after one or more other relationships are satisfied. One embodiment of these types of identifiers is discussed in detail in connection with Fig. 1 in this application. For example it describes that “[f]ifty percent of the cost of the items from item object 110a are to be paid using payment object 130a, as indicated by relationship object 150e. Relationship object 150e has a relationship type of PaymentPercentage, with a value, as indicated, of 50%. The remaining 50% of the cost of the item in item object 110a is not specified by a relationship between item object 110a and a payment object, and is therefore covered by payment object 130b, which relates to the order (order object 140) through relationship object 150g. The (*) in relationship object 150g indicates a relationship type of OrderAmountRemaining, for which a value is not designated.” [Page 9, Lines 3-10] In addition to failing to teach or suggest the elements of claim 18, the cited art does not teach or suggest the identifier described in claim 21.

New Claims 25-27

New claim 25 refers to an aspect of this application which can be applied for example when the user orders multiple items of the same type, and requests different subsets of those items to be delivered to different delivery destinations, or alternatively paid for by different

payment mechanisms. The specification explains that “[w]hen an item object is related to more than one of a particular type of object, each of that type of object is assigned to specific units within the item.”[Page 12, Lines 14-15] This claim finds further support in the examples related to Figure 1, for example in lines 20-25 on Page 8, and lines 3 to 10 on page 9.

New claim 26 refers to another aspect of the application, in which the relationships are based on information provided by a user placing an order. As explained in the application, “[a]n order processing system permits a buyer (user) to purchase multiple items as part of a single order. In a typical example, parts of the order can be shipped to different locations and the buyer can pay for the order using multiple payment mechanisms. The order processing system provides the buyer with flexibility as to how to ship each item and how to pay and account for different parts of the order, such as the product costs for some or all of the items, or the shipping costs associated with various shipping methods.”[Page 1, Line. 27- Page 2, Line. 2]

New claim 27 refers to an aspect of the application, in which the relationship includes a quantitative association between the objects. For example, for a relationship between an object representing ordered items and another object representing a payment mechanism, the quantitative association may specify a set percent of the price to be paid by the payment mechanism. Alternatively another relationship between the same first objects with a third object representing a different payment mechanism may specify a specific set maximum amount to be paid with this different payment mechanism. These quantitative relationships are explained in the specification for example in the passages quoted above in relation to claims 19 to 22.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above amendments and the reasons stated above, the pending application is believed to be in condition for allowance.

Filed herewith is a Request for a Three-Month Extension of Time, which extends the statutory period for response to expire on March 22, 2007. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that this response is being timely filed.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge the fees associated with the three new claims (one of which is independent), and to charge any fee deficiency or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 08-0219.

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Respectfully submitted,



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